

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/626,954

Examiner

Igor N. Borissov

Applicant(s)

RYAN, FREDERICK W.

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Interview Summary of January 29, 2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-18,21-26,28-44.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: ____.


Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date ____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date ____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other ____. |


IGOR N. BORISSOV
PRIMARY EXAMINER

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 101 and 35 USC § 112 have been withdrawn due to the Examiner's amendment.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a personal interview with an applicant's representative Joseph C. Kirincich (Reg. No.: 38,734) on Monday, January 29, 2007.

The application has been amended as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a postage metering system for printing a postage indicium subsidized by a mail campaign sender for use with a business reply mail piece, the method comprising the step(s) of:

receiving at the postage metering system from the mail campaign sender a registration ID number in human readable form, said registration ID number is associated with a delivery address previously defined by the mail campaign sender;

~~transmitting [[a]]the registration ID number, provided by the mail campaign sender to a user, from the postage metering system to a data center, the registration ID number being associated with a delivery address previously~~

~~defined by the mail campaign sender and disclosed in human readable form to the user of the postage metering system;~~

receiving postage indicium information at the postage metering system from the data center, the postage indicium information generated using the registration ID number and including data relating to the delivery address; and
printing the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system using the postage indicium information.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step(s) of:

receiving at the postage metering system from the data center the delivery address that has been selected by the data center from a plurality of delivery addresses according to parameters associated with the user of the postage metering system; and

printing the delivery address on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system, ~~where the delivery address has been selected, by the data center from a plurality of delivery addresses previously defined by the mail campaign sender, according to parameters associated with the user of the postage metering system that were previously established by the mail campaign sender.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, further comprising the step(s) of:

receiving a subsidy provided by the data center to the user of the postage metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece.

4. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a data center for generating postage indicium information for use with printing a postage indicium on a business reply mail piece, the method comprising the step(s) of:

receiving a delivery address at the data center in human readable form from a mail campaign sender corresponding to a mail campaign of which the business reply mail piece is a part;
generating at the data center a registration ID number corresponding to the delivery address;
providing the registration ID number to the mail campaign sender;
establishing a transaction session with a postage metering system;
receiving the registration ID number at the data center from the postage metering system, ~~where the registration ID number and delivery address in human readable form were previously provided by the mail campaign sender to a user of the postage metering system;~~
generating the postage indicium information at the data center using the registration ID number and data relating to the delivery address; and
~~transmitting~~providing the postage indicium information to the postage metering system for use in printing the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
performing address hygiene on the delivery address; and
transmitting a hygiened addressed to the mail campaign sender.
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing a subsidy to ~~[[the]]~~a user of the postage metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece; and
charging the subsidy to the mail campaign sender.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step(s) of:

receiving an expiration date from the mail campaign sender beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender that is associated with the registration ID number; and
providing a warning to the user of the postage metering system if the user of the postage metering system contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving an expiration date from the mail campaign sender beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender that is associated with the registration ID number; and
providing a warning to the user of the postage metering system if the user of the postage metering system contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a business reply mail processing system by a mail campaign sender, the method comprising the step(s) of:
associating a delivery address with a particular mail campaign which includes a business reply mail piece;
providing the [[a]]delivery address, ~~associated with a particular mail campaign which includes a business reply mail piece,~~ to a data center;
receiving from the data center a registration ID number associated with the delivery address; and
~~supplying~~providing the registration ID number, the business reply mail piece and delivery address in human readable form to a user of a postage metering system for printing by said user, ~~where the registration ID number is used by the user to print of~~ a postal indicium on the business reply mail piece including data relating to the delivery address.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:

receiving from the data center a new hygiened address representing a version of the delivery address prior to supplying the registration ID number and the business reply mail piece to the user of the postage metering system, where the new hygiened address is to be used as the delivery address.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising the step(s) of:
printing the registration ID number on the business reply mail piece.
12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step(s) of:
authorizing the data center to provide a subsidy to the user of the postage metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece; and
authorizing the data center to charge the subsidy to the mail campaign sender.
13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing the data center with an expiration date beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender that is associated with the registration ID number; and
authorizing the data center to warn the user of the postage metering system if the user of the postage metering system contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.
14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing the data center with an expiration date beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender that is associated with the registration ID number; and
authorizing the data center to warn the user of the postage metering system if the user of the postage metering system contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.

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15. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having computer readable instructions embedded therein which, when executed by a computer, causing said computer to perform a method for operating a data center for generating postage indicium for use with printing said postage indicium on a business reply mail piece, said method ~~memory device in operative communication with a computing system, the memory device comprising:~~

establishing a plurality of mail campaign sender accounts associated with respective mail campaign senders, where each of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts includes a registration ID number associated with a delivery address and a particular mail campaign of which said[[a]] business reply mail piece is a part, respectively;

receiving said delivery address at the data center in human readable form from the mail campaign sender corresponding to the mail campaign of which the business reply mail piece is a part;

generating at the data center a registration ID number corresponding to the delivery address;

providing the registration ID number to the mail campaign sender;

establishing a transaction session with a postage metering system;

receiving the registration ID number from the postage metering system;

~~[[,]]using where said registration ID number is used to generate a postage indicium; [[,]]and~~

providing ~~where~~ said postage indicium and delivery address in human readable form ~~are provided to a user of the[[a]] postage metering system.~~

16. (Currently Amended) The ~~memory device~~ computer readable medium of claim 15, further comprising the step of~~wherein:~~

determining for at least one of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts ~~further includes an indication associated with the registration ID number to determine whether or not the respective mail campaign sender authorizes a~~

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subsidy to a user of the postage metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece.

17. (Currently Amended) The ~~memory device~~ computer readable medium of claim 16, further comprising~~wherein~~:

including for at least one of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts ~~further~~ ~~includes~~ an expiration date, beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender, associated with the registration ID number to determine whether or not to provide a warning to the user.

18. (Currently Amended) The ~~memory device~~ computer readable medium of claim 15, further comprising~~wherein~~:

including for at least one of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts ~~further~~ ~~includes~~ an expiration date, beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender, associated with the registration ID number to determine whether or not to provide a warning to the user.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving the subsidy only if the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a subsidy provided by the data center to the user of the postage metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step(s) of:

receiving the subsidy only if the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step(s) of:
displaying a warning to the user of the postage metering system if the user of the postage metering system contacts the data center after an expiration date, defined by the mail campaign sender and beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender, attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece, where the expiration date is associated with the registration ID number.
25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing a subsidy to the user of the postage metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece; and
charging the subsidy to the mail campaign sender.
26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing the subsidy only if the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender.
27. (Cancelled)
28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
~~receiving~~ storing a plurality of delivery addresses ~~from previously defined by the~~
mail campaign sender;
storing said plurality of delivery addresses; and
selecting the delivery address for the business reply mail piece from the plurality of delivery addresses according to parameters, ~~previously established by the~~
~~mail campaign sender,~~ associated with the user of the postage metering

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system.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a plurality of delivery addresses from the mail campaign sender;
storing said ~~[[a]]~~plurality of delivery addresses ~~previously defined by the mail~~
~~campaign sender;~~ and
selecting the delivery address for the business reply mail piece from the plurality
of delivery addresses according to parameters ~~previously established by the~~
~~mail campaign sender,~~ associated with the user of the postage metering
system.
30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing a notification to the mail campaign sender when the business reply mail
piece is posted by the user of the postage metering system.
31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing a notification to the mail campaign sender when the business reply mail
piece is posted by the user of the postage metering system.
32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising the step(s) of:
specifying a time period in which the business reply mail piece must be posted to
receive the subsidy; and
authorizing the data center to charge the subsidy to the mail campaign sender
only if the business reply mail piece is posted within the specified time period.
33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:
specifying an expiration date beyond which the business reply mail piece is no
longer wanted by the mail campaign sender; and
authorizing the data center to provide a warning to the user of the postage
metering system if the user of the postage metering system contacts the data

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center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:
defining a plurality of delivery addresses; and
establishing parameters for use in determining a selected one of the plurality of delivery address to use as the delivery address on the business reply mail piece, where the parameters are associated with the user of the postage metering system.

35. (Currently Amended) The ~~memory device~~ computer readable medium of claim 15, further comprising~~wherein~~:

including for some of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts ~~further include~~ an expiration date beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender.

36. (Currently Amended) The ~~memory device~~ computer readable medium of claim 15, further comprising~~wherein~~:

including for some of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts ~~further include~~: (i) a plurality of delivery addresses; and (ii) parameters for use in determining a selected one of the plurality of delivery addresses to use as the delivery address on the business reply mail piece, where the parameters are associated with the user of the postage metering system.

37. (Currently Amended) The ~~memory device~~ computer readable medium of claim 17, ~~wherein~~further comprising:

including for some of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts ~~further include~~ an expiration date beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender.

38. (Currently Amended) The ~~memory device~~ computer readable medium of claim 17, further comprising wherein:

including for some of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts ~~further~~ include: (i) a plurality of delivery addresses; and (ii) parameters for use in determining a selected one of the plurality of delivery addresses es to use as the delivery address on the business reply mail piece, where the parameters are associated with the user of the postage metering system.

39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
sending a message to the mail campaign sender indicating that the user of the postage metering system has dispatched the business reply mail piece.

40. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7, further comprising the step(s) of:
sending a message to the mail campaign sender indicating that the user of the postage metering system has dispatched the business reply mail piece.

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, further comprising the step(s) of:
sending a message to the mail campaign sender indicating that the user of the postage metering system has dispatched the business reply mail piece.

42. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a message from the data center indicating that the user of the postage metering system has dispatched the business reply mail piece.

43. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a message from the data center indicating that the user of the postage metering system has dispatched the business reply mail piece.

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44. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 33, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a message from the data center indicating that the user of the postage metering system has dispatched the business reply mail piece.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-18, 21-26 and 28-44 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As per independent claims 1, 4, 9, and 15, the best prior art, Heiden in view of Sansone et al. teaches a method and a computer-readable medium having instructions for execution by a computer of said method, comprising: associating an ID number with a delivery address; transmitting the ID number to a user; disclosing the ID number in human readable form to the user of the postage metering system; receiving data relating to the delivery address; and printing the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system using the postage indicium information.

However, Heiden in view of Sansone et al. fails to teach or fairly suggest that said transmitted registration ID number is provided by the mail campaign sender to a user, from the postage metering system to a data center, wherein said registration ID number is associated with a delivery address previously defined by the mail campaign sender; and that said printing of the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system is conducted utilizing the postage indicium information including data relating to the delivery address, which is received at the postage metering system from the data center, and which is generated using said registration ID number.

The best foreign art, Andrews et al. (WO 01/69914 A2) discloses a method for managing transactions on the Internet, including causing, by a consumer, a management system to generate an encoded address, which is associated with the actual shipping address of the consumer; providing said encoded address to a merchant system; and utilizing said encoded address by the merchant system for retrieving the actual shipping address of the consumer for shipping goods to the consumer.

However, Andrews et al. fails to teach or fairly suggest that said transmitted registration ID number is provided by the mail campaign sender to a user, from the postage metering system to a data center, wherein said registration ID number is associated with a delivery address previously defined by the mail campaign sender; and that said printing of the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system is conducted utilizing the postage indicium information including data relating to the delivery address, which is received at the postage metering system from the data center, and which is generated using said registration ID number.

The best NPL prior art, Sweeping Changes Proposed in South Africa (DIALOG(R) File 129:PHIND(Archival) (c) 2001 PJB Publications, Ltd., Scrip 2154 p14, August 13, 1996 (19960813)), while teaching specifics of postage markings, fails to teach or fairly suggest that said transmitted registration ID number is provided by the mail campaign sender to a user, from the postage metering system to a data center, wherein said registration ID number is associated with a delivery address previously defined by the mail campaign sender; and that said printing of the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system is conducted utilizing the postage indicium information including data relating to the delivery address, which is received at the postage metering system from the data center, and which is generated using said registration ID number.

The remaining dependent claims are considered allowable, as they are dependent and based off of an allowable independent claims.

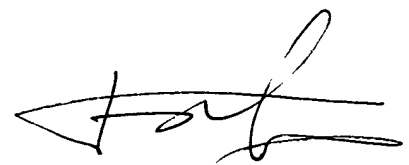
Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submission should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reason for Allowance".

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Igor Borissov whose telephone number is 703-305-4649. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on 703-308-2702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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1/29/07



IGOR N. BORISSOV
PRIMARY EXAMINER